

Residence Life Statement on Multiculturalism



UMASS AMHERST Residence Life

To achieve the promise of diversity, we need to hear, understand, and appreciate the voice of Individual Differences and the voice of Social Justice. We need to recognize that both voices are not only valid but necessary. Both must be heard and acted upon to bring about an inclusive organizational culture. Mutual listening, respect, and understanding are required to make a true dialogue possible. And once a dialogue has begun, it becomes possible to partner with each other to create an effective plan for change that includes, values, and taps the differences and similarities of every member and every identity group.

“Developing the dialogue and building the partnership may not be easy or quick. But by hearing the voices, valuing their experiences, and respecting their points of view, the dialogue finally becomes possible. And that’s where all progress begins.” - Frederick A. Miller, *from preface of The Promise of Diversity*

Residence Life contends multiculturalism as recognizing, acknowledging, and valuing the many cultural perspectives as represented by our residential students, staff, and campus communities. It is our understanding that multiculturalism transcends celebrating differences and should go beyond the recognition of any specific identities. We envision multiculturalism as an individual, group, professional, and organizational commitment. Accordingly, we commit to reflect upon and to exemplify the ways and means that members of our Residence Life staff add to a quality of life and satisfaction through articulated policies and procedures, and demonstrated performance. Moreover, this commitment to multiculturalism reflects how our organization’s planning and activities support and/or facilitate the residential learning and work experiences of our diverse residential communities, student leaders, live-in staff, and management group.

In accordance with the University’s academic mission and the department of Housing and Residence Life’s mission and goals, Residence Life as an organization strives to promote social and civil responsibility, cross cultural understanding and tolerance, and residents’ academic and personal development.

The following ideas reflect Residence Life’s commitment:

We strive to create an environment to support a dynamic living, learning, and working place within and beyond the residence halls in which multiculturalism is explored through challenge and self-reflection which affirms everyone.

We strive to review and assess our administrative systems to insure just and ethical processes including, but not limited to, recruitment, support, and retention of diverse personnel.

We strive to provide training and education for the purpose of continuing the investigation of

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multiculturalism as components of ongoing opportunities and organizational progress.

We strive to continue to discuss diversity issues as an organizational priority and to practice multiculturalism in our approach to management, problem solving, and interaction at all levels and within our service including programming, training, supervision, counseling, community development, professional development, teaching, and role modeling.

We strive to embrace the various forms and manifestations of diversity as represented in our residence hall communities; furthermore, to serve all students with compassion, honesty, and commitment to the best of our abilities and capacities regardless of their individual and/or group origins and belief systems.

We understand this statement to be an expressed commitment of our work in progress which will continue to develop and to take shape as the organization changes and pursues its mission and goals. We strive to periodically evaluate our ongoing development toward becoming a multicultural organization.